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OUT

INEFFICIENCY DUE TO SCARCITY OF "HELLO GIRLS"

Operators Are Overworked, Investigator Finds — The Service Is Slow Because of This Deficiency.

Lack of enough operators to handle the increasing volume of calls, the overloading of the operators available is apparently the chief reason that the Chamber of Commerce Telephone and Telegraph company is seeking a new service, according to information received from Wm. J. N. Cadny, of Madison, Wis. The Chamber of Commerce is now investigating the service on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce law committee.

During an inspection of the switchboard room in the downtown exchange building, the law committee members observed that one girl would be serving from 12 to 16 plugs on the switchboard, and that the girls would establish a line of 8 to 10 in about all the calls served with speed and accuracy for any conditions.

This condition is chiefly reflected in the service, according to tests made by the law committee.

Mr. Cadny in the slowness with which calls are handled, is receiving about 60 test calls from both residential and business houses, in a number of different locations. Mr. Cadny found that slowness was the chief fault in the service. Wrong numbers given and calls not connected were the chief average. The investigator also experienced some trouble with disconnected calls. In fairness to the telephone company, the slowness in private exchanges were probably re-

Concerning this latter fault, Mr. Cadby expressed the opinion that it would be a good thing if classes were conducted by the telephone company or the business organizations jointly, to train better private operators, such as those who serve in many large business houses and hotels. This, he said, would contribute to the general improvement of the service.

But the Chamber of Commerce is

committee, which is headed by W. P. Armstrong, the new city attorney, is not satisfied that the telephone company is making every possible effort to secure the operators needed. Upon the supposition that the company may not be offering wages sufficient to attract adequately equipped young women

to the service, investigation is being made of the wages of young women clerks in the department stores, stenographers, bookkeepers and other young women whose wages are obtained by young women in the other lines will be compared with the wages paid by the telephone company.

Mr. Cadby stated Tuesday morning that the telephone company is co-operating with him in his investigations and generously giving him every opportunity to inspect their books and furnishing whatever data he requests. The company does not deny he said, that the service is under par.

but pleads inability to correct it because of the impossibility of getting enough trained operators. The company has enough switchboard equipment to serve the city of Memphis efficiently, he said.

The investigator was very conservative and guarded in all statements concerning his investigations. In talking to The News Scimitar he said that he did not want to be put in the attitude of making his report to the public instead of to the committee which retained him. He asked that his statements be handled conservatively and he not be put in the light of a seeker

Mr. Caddy enjoys a wide experience in telephone matters. He served for 10 years for the Wisconsin railroad commission as head of their service department and directed investigations of telephone, gas and light service throughout the state for that length of

MAY PUT MEMPHIS ON VALLEY HIGHWAY

CLINTON, Ky., Jan. 12. (Sp.)—Kentucky division of the Mississippi Valley Highway association was organized at a meeting held at the courthouse Monday afternoon which was attended by a large number of good road builders from the towns in Kentucky on this highway, and the farmers residing along same.

Those towns on this division are as follows: Wickliffe, Bardwell, Arlington, Clinton and Fulton.

The route from Fulton, Ky. to St. Louis, Mo., passing through Fulton, is settled as far as the Mississippi Valley highway is concerned, but it is quite likely that the route from Fulton to New Orleans may be changed so as to go by the way of Memphis, Tenn., and

Jackson, Tenn., and Meridian, Miss., as Memphis and Jackson are making a strong bid for the changing of the route of the Mississippi Valley highway from Fulton to New Orleans. The changing of the route, however, will depend to a great extent on the activity shown by the citizens along the present marked orange and white trail from Fulton to Jackson, Meridian, Miss., and New Orleans.

FRANCE TAKES STEPS TO STOP BUILDING WARSHIPS

PARIS, Jan. 13.—Steps were taken by the cabinet today to stop the construction of the five dreadnoughts of the Normandie class, laid down just before the war, but never completed. Finance Minister Klotz was authorized to introduce a bill for this purpose. Other measures authorized will direct that the six scout cruisers provided by

The plans for the Normandie class of dreadnoughts provided for vessels displacing 25,230 tons each, with main batteries of 12 13.4-inch guns and 34 5.5-inch guns. Their construction was

suspended not long after the outbreak of the war and their 13.4-inch guns were transferred to the army. The building of the dreadnoughts was resumed later.

WIDOW GETS ALL.

The will of R. W. Rickx, deceased, bequeathing all of his real and personal property to his widow, Mary Alice Rickx, was admitted to probate Tuesday morning by Probate Judge F. M. Cuthrie.